



Delaware Children's Department Announces Recipients of First-Ever SOC Team Award

In an effort to recognize the efforts and positive outcomes of collaborative team work within a system of care framework, the Delaware Children's Department recently solicited nominations for the first-ever SOC Team Award. Teams across the state were nominated and, after serious review and lengthy discussions, a winning team was selected.

Nominated by team member **Jennifer Uebelher** of DFS, the team also included: **Christine Montgomery** of DFS, Guardian Ad Litem **MC Landis**, Maple Lane Elementary School staff members **Alison Dankel**, **Ryan Matthews** and **Julianne Pecorella**, Children & Families First therapist **Robin Redman** and foster parent **Laverne Sutton**.

Among the comments made by the judges were kudos regarding the team's ability to garner involvement from the community, be truly seamless within and across organizations, have excellent communication, involve the foster parent as an integral member of the team, produce positive outcomes and hold no preconceived notions regarding the youth and his abilities.

The team worked together through numerous IEP meetings, psychiatric evaluations, crisis events and other ups and downs in order to ensure that the youth served, Amir B., achieved stability and success. Their hard work truly paid off when Amir was promoted to the second grade and an adoptive family was identified.

Two other teams were also recognized for their efforts through second place and honorable mention awards.

The second place team had a true multi-disciplinary make-up and worked proactively toward meeting the youth's needs. Team members, including **Maria Theil** of DFS, **Jitka Lejckova** and **Mary Jo Begley** of CMH, foster parent **Louise Kinsler**, therapist **Dr. Lentine** and biological mother **Cynthia H.**, also took great care to explain to the youth what and why service selections were made for him.

Members of the team receiving honorable mention showed a strong desire to engage the family and encouraged team members to share thoughts – regardless of how others might have felt. The team included mother **Shelly W.**, Guardian ad Litem **Michael Cochran**, psychologist **Caitlyn Martin**, attorney **Jim Maxwell**, the Honorable **Judge Crowell**, psychiatrist **Dr. Stanchi**, **Dolores Allen-McIntyre**, **Melanie Sowa**, **Toby Greco**, **Denise McNair**, **Janet Oliver**, **Ann Simpson**, **Nancy Paist-Riches** and **Chris McIntyre** of DMSS, **Belinda Willard**, **Jacqueline McMichael** and **Susan Schmidt** of CMH, **Tamara Nock** and **Eric McLaurin** of YRS, and **Tracey Sontowski** of DFS.

Each team showed true commitment to the System of Care philosophy, which benefited the youth in their care and served to strengthen the ever growing bond among the service divisions in our department and the myriad of partners within the community. Please congratulate these teams for their hard work and dedication.